

Message Text

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12

ACTION SY-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-05 ISO-00 VO-01 AF-05 CIAE-00 INSE-00

SCA-01 USSS-00 /020 W

----- 117056

R 270411Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9135

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FOR ATTENTION ALSO OF NEA BUREAU

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: CVIS, KU

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR EXCEPTION TO BOULDER EXPEDITE

REF: STATE 24762

1. WE ARE RAPIDLY APPROACHING THE MONTHS OF OUR HEAVIEST VISA AND CONSULAR WORK, I.E. RETURNING STUDENTS, NEW STUDENTS, AND THE ANNUAL EXODUS OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, VISITORS, BUSINESSMEN WHO PLAN BUSINESS-TOURIST TRIPS IN THE SUMMER TO ESCAPE THE BLISTERING HEAT.

2. NOT A FEW OF OUR APPLICANTS ARE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND BUSINESSMEN WHO, IF NOT WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN BY AN EMBASSY STAFFER, NEVERTHELESS, BEAR EXCELLENT CREDENTIALS WHEN THEY APPLY; EITHER A LETTER FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, OR THE SPONSORING GOVERNMENT OFFICE, OR A TELEPHONE CALL FROM A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL OR PROMINENT BUSINESSMAN WHOSE JUDGEMENT WE RECOGNIZE AS SOUND. THESE PEOPLE NOT ONLY RESENT WAITING SEVEN DAYS FOR A VISA WHEN THEY KNOW AMERICAN APPLICANTS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THE SAME CONDITIONS, THEY FIND IT CAUSES THEM SERIOUS INCONVENIENCES AND SOMETIMES COSTLY DELAYS. OFTIMES THEIR TRAVEL PLANS INCLUDE A FAST VISIT WITH THEIR MOTHER OR SON HOLIDAYING IN BEIRUT, A BUSINESS CONFERENCE IN PARIS, FOLLOWED BY A DAY OF FUN IN LONDON BEFORE FLYING TO THE U.S. THE SEVEN DAY WAITING PERIOD NOT ONLY CUTS INTO THEIR PLANS

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BUT THOSE OF THEIR FAMILIES AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATES WHO ARE

INCIDENTAL TO THE VISA PROCESS.

3. COMPARING THE SLOW PROCESS REQUIRED BY THE U.S. EMBASSY WITH THE EXPEDITIOUS TREATMENT EXTENDED BY OTHER EMBASSIES, THESE APPLICANTS ARE SINGULARLY UNHAPPY, AND ARE NOT WONT TO CONCEAL THEIR DISPLEASURE. MANY OF THEM HAVE HAD PREVIOUS U.S. VISAS, BUT ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR BOULDER RENEWAL PROCEDURES, OR HAVE STUDIED FOR MANY YEARS IN THE STATES. IT IS USELESS TRYING TO REASON WITH THEM. IN THE CASE OF A HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, OR BUSINESS EXECUTIVE WE INEVITABLY HEAR DIRECTLY FROM A HIGHER UP IN THE ESTABLISHMENT. IF WE ARE LUCKY IT IS ONLY ONE PHONE CALL, USUALLY IT IS TWO OR THREE - WE HAVE HAD UP TO SEVEN - FROM DIFFERENT PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE SAME CASE. WHEN THE COMPLAINT COMES WE HAVE THE OPTION OF STANDING FIRM ON OUR INSISTENCE THAT THE SEVEN DAY PERIOD BE OBSERVED, OR ISSUE THE VISA IN EXPECTATION OF A REPLY, SUCH AS THE REFERENCE, REMINDING US TO OBSERVE THE BOULDER PROCESS.

4. WE ARE SPEAKING HERE NOT OF THE ORDINARY STUDENT OR VISITOR, BUT ABOUT THE MAN OF INFLUENCE IN THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THE GOVERNMENT - AND IN THIS MERCANTILE STATE IT IS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO SEPERATE THE TWO - WHO TAKES HIS TRAVEL AND MONEY MAKING SERIOUSLY. AT A TIME WHEN THE U.S. AND THE EMBASSY ARE MAKING INTENSIVE EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE THE TRAVEL OF INFLUENTIAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND THE FLOW OF BIG BUSINESS TO THE UNITED STATES, WE FIND THAT RIGID ADHERENCE TO THE BOULDER PROGRAM AS FAR AS THE UNIQUE SITUATION IN KUWAIT IS CONCERNED, COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. WE RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR AND ENDORSE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM. WE SCRUTINIZE ALL APPLICATIONS, AND WE APPLY THESE PROCEDURES STRINGENTLY. WE BELIEVE HOWEVER THAT THERE IS MARGIN ENOUGH TO ALLOW FLEXIBILITY FOR THE CONSULAR OFFICER IN KUWAIT TO ISSUE AT HIS DISCRETION BOULDER EXPEDITES VISAS BEFORE THE REPLY IS RECEIVED FROM THE DEPARTMENT. WE WOULD USE THIS AUTHORITY SPARINGLY AND ONLY WHEN WE FELT THE INDIVIDUAL CASE REQUIRED OR DESERVED THE EXCEPTION. AS WE MENTIONED ABOVE IT IS ONLY THE RARE APPLICANT WHO PROCEEDS DIRECTLY TO THE U.S. IF FOR SOME REASON THE BOULDER CAME BACK WITH DEROGATORY INFORMATION, THERE IS ALMOST ALWAYS SUFFICIENT TIME TO ALERT THE APPROPRIATE PORT OF ENTRY.

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5. WE THINK IT MAKES GOOD POLITICS AND BUSINESS SENSE TO RELAX THE BOULDER PROCEDURES FOR THOSE PERSONS WE HAVE DESCRIBED ABOVE, AND WE REQUEST THE AUTHORITY TO DO SO.
STOLTZFUS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974KUWAIT01168
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740067-0178
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740312/aaaaaknh.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SY
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 24762
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 APR 2002 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <30 JUL 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR EXCEPTION TO BOULDER EXPEDITE
TAGS: CVIS, KU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005